THE WORKERS'

DREADNOUGHT

For International Socialism.

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BETWEEN OURSELVES. By L. A. Motler.

PRINTING RUSSIAN TRAM TICKETS.

When you want to know something about a thing, Henry, it is just as well to see, so to speak, from which barrel the beer comes if you are at all doubtful about it. For instance, if you want to read up all about football, you do not begin by taking in the local parish magazine. Likewise, if you want to know the price of cabbages (controlled) you do not apply at the nearest chemist's. Now, you will probably invite me to tell you something you don't know. Good! Let us take the price of tram tickets in Russia. Firstly, I will draw your attention to the one appended herewith :—

This is an actual tram-ticket for use in Archangel. It is being printed in large numbers in London at the present moment. The fact is obvious that the Allies are in control of the trams in Archangel and the question naturally arises, What are they doing there?

That will be answered presently, and meantime I will draw your attention, Henry, to another item. It is from *The Star* (December 30th, 1918) :—

"The week-end casualty lists give the following figures: Officers, dead 7; men, dead 643, wounded or missing, 1,475—total 2,125."

Now the war is as good as over; there is no fighting to speak of; but two days before the new year, and sixty days after the signing of the armistice, out comes a "week end casualty list." And on the day previous, the Admiralty issued a bulletin to the effect that a British warship reports having captured two Bolshevik destroyers. Is that the price of getting tram-ticket orders?

And what are the Allies doing in Russia? Apparently, getting orders for tram tickets at the point of the bayonet. This is not a mere supposition. The facts speak for themselves, Henry, as plain as the nose on your face. And if you still have lingering doubts, well——

As I said at the beginning of this article, when you want to know about football, don't ask a greengrocer. When you want to know about Russia come to THE DREADNOUGHT offices and get *facts*.

I have here before me—and I am sorry the manifesto is just a trifle too long to reproduce fully—a sheet of paper headed 'Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic,' and with the following question in big type :

'WHY HAVE YOU COME TO MURMANSK?"

It is signed by Lenin and Tchitcherine and comes red-hot from the Bolshevik Press in Moscow. It has been distributed to the English-speaking troops on the Murmansk coast, and several copies have reached England; but does the daily press print it? I should smile.

The daily press is not so green: in fact, it is usually yellow, except when it is in a blue funk; but it changes colour so often I might dub it the Piebald Press. And this press would not let you read in its columns as follows :—

"The Murman railway is in no danger either from the Germans or Finns. If you look at a map you will see that the railways and roads from the west of Finland end hundreds of miles short of the Murman railway. If the Finns approach our border they must traverse hundreds of miles of marshy forest land....Neither can the Germans threaten our railway. If the Germans want to attack the Murman railway, they must first take Petrograd and march through our country hundreds of miles."

Lenin is also careful to explain that Russia is not at war with Germany and they cannot advance on Petrograd without declaring war on Russia. The Allies, apparently, can do without that trifling formality, and once having got into Murmansk, keep it a dark secret why they are there or else tell brazen lies about it.

Brazen lies? On December 19th recently past, Lord Milner declared that "our troops went to Russia not to meddle with Russia's internal affairs." In his manifesto Lenin says:—

"Your Government is interfering in our internal affairs. It has established its own control in the district you occupy. It has cut off our telegraphic communication with outside. It is attempting to seduce our citizens into fighting against us. At Kem your Government shot four members of our local Soviet. Your Government denies that it did so, but we have positive proof that it did."

So now you know how to get tram-ticket orders. Now you know what it means "not to impose any particular form of government on Russia." Now you know why, although the war is as good as over, we still have casualty lists.

If an American army came to South Wales and said it was there to defend the coal-mines from the Germans, you would smile. The miners would probably tell the Americans that the best place for them was Home and Mother. But when it comes to Allied troops occupying the Murman railway, the Baku oilfields, the Siberian wheat districts, ah, well!——

It is none of our business, eh, Henry? Lenin says further :—

"For the first time in history the working people have got control of their country. The workers of all countries are striving to achieve this object. We in Russia have succeeded. We have thrown off the rule of the Tsar, of landlords, and of capitalists. But we still have tremendous difficulties to overcome. We cannot build a new society in a day. We desire to be left alone."

Good, Henry, distinctly good. He desires to be left alone, so come and let's have one before closing time.

"Comrades! Englishmen!"

Chin-chin, Henry.

"You who pride yourselves on your love of liberty!"

Same to you, old man.

"Comrades! Descendants of the great Chartists! You who have always expressed sympathy with the Russian Revolution—are you going to assist in crushing the first effort of working people to free themselves from their sweaters and exploiters?"

Henry, I should worry.

AGENTS WANTED FOR THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.'—Are you a regular reader of the paper? Do you sell it at the meetings of your organisation? Introduce it to your workshop.

VICTORY.

WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' COUNCIL IN FRANCE.

In May, as Longuet reported at a recent Inter-Allied Socialist and Labour Conference in London, great strikes occurred in France, the demands of the workers being that French war aims should be re-stated, and Wilson's fourteen points endorsed by the French Government. At St. Etienne the workers went further and proclaimed a Workers' and Soldiers' Council. The military were called out and hundreds of men and women were arrested. Between 30 and 40 of the prisoners are still in gaol. A fortnight ago a mass meeting addressed by Jean Longuet was held outside the gaol. Mr. Paul Hanna of America tells us that this was a most remarkable demonstration. Mr. Hanna throws further light on the demonstration to welcome Wilson which the Socialists desired to arrange, but afterwards abandoned when Clemenceau said they must first ask President Wilson's permission as reported in the Press. Mr. Hanna explains that the reason the Socialists refused Clemenceau's suggestion was that they thought it would put Wilson in the position of asking them to arrange a demonstration. When Wilson and his party arrived, however, and Longuet went to present an address to Wilson, Admiral Grayson asked him on the President's behalf when the Socialist demonstration would take place. Longuet explained that it would not take place; but the Socialists afterwards organised another demonstration in conjunction with the Society for Mutilated Soldiers. The mutilated soldiers, blind, legless, armless, went from door to door collecting their mutilated comrades. Then, some 3,000 of them assembled at the Arc de Triomphe, a similar company at the Place de la Concorde and Rue Royale and another at the Opera. After the President had passed down the Champs the cripples formed in procession and marched with red flags from the Arc de Triomphe, picking up the other companies on their way. They were joined by many American soldiers and civilians of all sorts. As they passed the offices of the Royalist newspaper, the *Action Francaise*, the Royalists assailed them with abuse, accosting the blind and the limbless soldiers as "spies," "German agents," and "tools of the enemy." The pitiful procession made no response, but the crowds assembled on the pavements cheered it as it passed by.

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE.

THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL WAR.

ALLIES JOIN WITH GERMANS AGAINST RUSSIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS.

Karl Liebknecht says an International Civil War between Socialism and Capitalism is developing.

In Germany Ebert and Scheidemann have allied themselves, not openly, but none the less definitely, with the forces of Capitalism. The Independent social democrats have realised this and have therefore left the Government.

The following letter which appeared in *The Manchester Guardian* clearly indicates how sharply the international war is already defined :—

SIR,—I find the following paragraph in *Vorwarts* of Dec. 6 :—

"Neue Nachrichten"—a paper published at Berdiansk, on the Sea of Azoff—publishes the following manifesto of the Allies, who are about to intervene in Russia:—

"We inform hereby the inhabitants of Odessa and neighbourhood that we have arrived on the territory of Russia with the object of restoring order and freeing the country from the Bolshevik usurpers, for which reason the reports spread by the Bolshevik provocators that the Allied troops have come to South Russia in order to drive out the Germans are absolutely false. Both the Germans and ourselves have come here not as conquerors but as champions of right. Hence their objects and ours are identical. The reports of impending fights are not true, and are being circulated with the object of sowing a panic. All the unhealthy elements of Russia—that is, the Bolsheviks and their adherents—are hereby placed outside law, and persons harbouring them will be handed over to court-martial. We do not recognise any organisation except those fighting the Bolsheviks—the Volunteer and Cossack armies, as well as the troops of the Constituent Assembly. Hence all organisations which are in possession of arms are ordered to deliver them to the specially appointed representatives of the international army section."

The manifesto is signed—Sir Nevile (?), for England ; Hours, for France ; Gajani, for Japan ; S. (Z.) Holinsky, for Russia ; Saniti, for Italy ; O'Reimann, for Belgium ; Silitch, for Serbia ; Kargit, for Greece ; Grinesku, for Rumania.

I cannot imagine that "Vorwarts" should have invented the manifesto, nor that the "Neue Nachrichten" should have dared to fabricate such a document under the eyes of the Allied Army of Occupation. The manifesto is a puzzle to me. I know that we are no longer at war with the Germans, but I did not know that we had concluded an alliance with them against the Bolsheviks.—Yours, &c., CURIOUS.

* * *

The class struggle is nowhere more clearly seen than in the Baltic provinces, where the people, the Letts, Esthonians and others have long been revolutional Socialists, entirely Bolsheviki and where German Barons form the ruling class. When the Germans forced on Russia the peace of Brest-Litovsk they justified themselves by asserting that the Baltic provinces had declared for independence of Russia under the protection of Germany, because the organs of the German Barons had so declared. Now it appears that the Allies who denounced the peace of Brest-Litovsk are adhering to its terms by preventing the Baltic provinces from being re-united to Soviet Russia. On January 3rd *The Daily News* published a Wolff Bureau telegram from Copenhagen which stated: "The Soldiers' Council at Mitau reports that the British in the Port of Riga have demanded that German troops shall remain there to protect the population....On Sunday, December 29th, two companies of the Lithuanian Government militia in Riga mutinied, and declared their intention of uniting with the Bolsheviki. The Lithuanian Premier, M. Ullmann, appealed to a company of the German Baltic militia to disarm the mutineers, but they refused to do so on the ground of not wishing to increase the antagonism between the two nations. Members of the Lithuanian Government thereupon visited the British squadron anchored off Riga, and the British commander communicated with the German authorities regarding active intervention. Following upon discussions German troops surrounded the mutineers' barracks early on Monday morning, and presented an ultimatum demanding the surrender of the mutineers within a given time. As this was not forthcoming, the British, in concert with the German command, intervened with naval and artillery forces, and made pretence of bombarding the barracks. The Lithuanian companies, numbering 200, then surrendered unconditionally."

Later, we are glad to say, Riga was taken by the Bolsheviki, who were aided by some of the German soldiers who joined the International war on the people's side.

In Poland the International war is developing. The Polish Nationalists have won much territory from the Germans, but according to Press reports, the Germans and Poles have declared a truce in order that they may together fight Bolshevik Socialism. The Poles are also appealing to the Allied Governments for help against Socialism.

The latest news from Hungary is, that, as it was in Russia, and is in Germany, so in Hungary, the workers in the factories are taking control of the industries without waiting for legislative sanction.

Meanwhile Reuter reports from Omsk in Russia that the Allies are supporting the Governments of Admiral Koltchak at Omsk and of Sazonoff in the Northern Caucasus. Both these men are reactionaries of the old Czarist regime. The fear of the Allies and our hope is that the Spartacus group may gain power in Berlin, so that Lenin and Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg and Liebknecht may form of Russia and Germany a solid Socialist block.

It is most important that Socialists should not gull themselves with false hopes that the Allies are withdrawing from Russia. British warships are being withdrawn from Reval, merely that they may not be frozen in. The Japanese are withdrawing some of their troops, it is said, but it is also said they are leaving enough soldiers behind to keep order in Siberia—that would be a very large order if it were true. The war of starvation is the war which the Allies are prosecuting against Socialist Russia. Socialists in all countries, and all workers should be Socialists, should use every effort to stop it.

STARVATION IN RUSSIA.

The Daily News of January 6th published a Reuter message from Stockholm giving an account of affairs in Petrograd said to have been given by 17 Bolsheviki who reported the "city in the immediate future will become one vast burial ground for the starving crowds, who are falling down in numbers in the streets. As for food, they have practically only oats left now ; a herring costs 20 roubles, and a bundle of firewood 300 roubles."

We hope that this story is exaggerated, but we know that there is some truth in it. Famine in Petrograd is caused by the counter-Revolutionaries who with Allied help are preventing supplies of food from the districts where food is produced from reaching the Russian capital. British workers, until we stop the intervention we cannot escape responsibility for this terrible state of affairs.

Again and again the Soviet Government has sought to make peace with the Allies. But protesting that their object is to put down Bolshevik "violence" the Allies have continued their armed attack on Russia.

The Russian Soviet Government has now sent out through its wireless stations the following protest against the intervention :-

"At the moment when the armies of the Entente are crossing the frontiers and its navies are approaching the coasts of the former Russian Empire the Government of the Soviet Republic once more raises a solemn protest, in face of the wide masses of the people of the Entente countries, the misled and misguided soldiers and sailors of their armies and navies, and the labouring brothers of the entire world. Against this wanton attack, this act of naked force and brutal outrage, this attempt to destroy the liberties and the political and social life of the people of another country, the Soviet Government protests.

"The Russian Republic had offered peace to the countries of the Entente, but their Governments ignored this offer, and the present attack is their reply. The Socialist Soviet Republic is still prepared to make peace. It relies on its faithful and gallant Red Army to repel these attacks, and throws the responsibility for renewed bloodshed upon those who are about to attack its frontiers and who continue the policy of oppression in the occupied territories."

PRINCE KROPOTKIN.

In view of the report that Prince Kropotkin has been murdered, a Russian Government wireless message reproduced in the Zurich *Volksrecht* categorically denies the report in the capitalist papers of Peter Kropotkin's arrest. Kropotkin, the message asserts, is enjoying complete freedom and *is in friendly relations with the Soviet Government.*

LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND RUSSIAN INTERVENTION.

The Russian Commonwealth, the anti-Bolshevik paper published in London which has backed the Allied intervention, now says: "In Russian democratic circles, where much uneasiness concerning the intervention prevails, the opinion that a League of Nations as the only legal instrument for an intervention grows stronger each day."

This puts into words our own suspicion of the use to which the League of Capitalist Nations will be put—to put down Bolshevism in all lands—Bolshevism has now become, of course, the name for Socialism of the immediate sort. A proclamation of the anti-Bolshevik Archangel Government, published in the same magazine, states that "Bolshevism is regrettably not only a Russian, but an international danger."

This Archangel Government declares that "no Bolshevik usurper can have a place" at the Peace Conference. *The Russian Commonwealth* claims that the anti-Bolsheviki must be represented there, but naively admits that it does not know by whom, for, it says: "We are not sure that the situation in Siberia will clear soon enough for the Allies to recognise the Kolchak Ministry as an all-Russian Government. Therefore the question: Who will represent Russia? still remains." *The Russian Commonwealth* persists, in referring to the groups of counter-revolutionaries who are fighting the Bolsheviki as "Russia" and, though it does not, as we have seen, know which group of them will be chosen, it assumes that, of course, they will be present at the Peace Conference. It says: "Although only possessing a moral force, the Russian delegation would still possess a force, since backed by the Allies' decisive support."

The position of these counter-revolutionaries seems to us to be clearly this. They have no force behind them, because the mass of the Russian people is opposed to them, but they desire the arms of the Allies to establish them in power, and they persist in describing themselves as "Russia." Because for generations they and their like have dominated the nation, now that the masses have come into power, they describe them as usurpers.

The Russian Commonwealth raises its voice in horror because the Soviet Government has conscribed the bourgeois for street cleaning—merely as spare time workers, like the unpaid special constables here, we conclude, since they get no wages for this job. The Russian bourgeois are not conscribed for the Red Army, as the workers are ; instead they are given some of the disagreeable necessary work *that has to be done by someone.* The Soviets do not force the capitalists to fight to maintain the workers' Government, though capitalist governments always force the workers to fight for capitalism. Surely it is better to sweep streets for the community than to fight for a Government to which one is opposed.

NEW COMMITTEE.

The *Freiheit*, organ of the Independent Socialists, publishes a Russian Government wireless message announcing the formation of a Supreme National Committee of Defence to unify the military efforts of the country against the Allied intervention. All Socialist parties, including the Menshevik and Left Socialist Revolutionaries, are represented on the Committee, and the president is Lenin himself. The Central Committee of the Menshevik party has issued a special manifesto calling for unity of action with the Soviet Government, and its leader Abramovitch has been delegated to the Central Committee of the Soviets.

HOW RUSSIA TREATS SMALL NATIONS.

In reply to the note of the Finnish Government concerning the recognition of the independence of the Finnish Republic, the Council of the Peoples' Commissaries, in full agreement with the principles of self-determination of nations, has decided in favour of making the following proposition to the Central Executive Committee : (*a*) to recognise the Finnish Republic as an independent State ; and (*b*) to form, in agreement with the Finnish Government, a special Commission of representatives of both countries, with the purpose of working out of those practical measures which arise from the separation of Finland and Russia.

Chairman of the Council of Peoples' Commissaries : V. OULIANOFF (LENIN).
Peoples' Commissaries : V. HENZINSKY, V. PROUTOVSKY, G. PETROVSKY.
Manager of the Affairs : V. BOUCH-BRUEVITCH.
Secretary of the Council : GORBOUNOFF.
December 19th, 1917.

[This recommendation was accepted and given effect to.—EDITOR.]

WORKSHOP NOTES. By W. F. WATSON.

The Discharged Soldiers' and Sailors' Federation and the demand for increased unemployed pay.

INFORMATION WANTED.

In West London the Discharged Soldiers are like their comrades in Glasgow, very active, and many of them are working at Clement Talbots, the big motor engineers. Some weeks ago the workers at Clement Talbots were approached by the D. and D.S. and S.F. with a view to organising a joint demonstration to demand that the unemployed pay be increased to £3. The matter was placed in the hands of the West London Engineering Workers' Committee which immediately got into touch with other committees, and convened a conference to make final arrangements for the demonstration, the date of which was provisionally fixed for January 15th. I should here mention that the discharged soldiers at Clement Talbots have dropped the name of soldiers and call themselves workers, shewing their willingness to throw in their lot with the other workers. On January 1st, the Secretary of the Acton Branch of the D. and D.S. and S.F. received a notice from headquarters that an *official* demonstration had been fixed for Saturday, January 11th, in consequence of which no representative from the Federation turned up at Thursday's Conference. We rather suspect that the Federation officials, backed up by the Government are alarmed at the good fellowship that is fast growing between the organised workers and the discharged soldiers, and hurriedly arranged this demonstration as a counter-move. The conference, therefore, decided to back up the demonstration of January 11th to ask the D. and D.S. and S.F. to accept speakers from the other workers and to have representatives other than discharged soldiers on the deputation to the Ministry. I sincerely hope that all workers will scotch this obvious attempt to antagonise the workers by supporting the discharged soldiers to-day, Saturday, 1.30 o'clock on the Embankment.

A CHALLENGE TO BOB SMILLIE.

At the dinner recently held by the London Workers' Committee Jack Mooney stated that Bob Smillie had asked him to convey a message to the effect that should a Coalition Government be returned at the forthcoming Election, he would use his influence to make the position of the Government untenable. Smillie spoke to the same effect at Albert Hall meeting organised by the N.U.R. At the L.W.C. monthly meeting held on Sunday, Jauary 5th, it was decided to write to Smillie urging him to put his threat into operation, with the suggestion that the best way to do so, was to use his influence to bring about a complete stoppage of the mining industry as a protest against the violation of Russia.

Now, then, Bob, it is up to you to ACT. We have had enough of mere threats.

EAST LONDON ACTIVITIES.

As a result of a meeting held at 400, Old Ford Road an East London Workers' Committee, on similar lines to the L.W.C., has been formed and propaganda meetings are held every Sunday morning in Victoria Park. Associate members are required.

The River Thames Shop Stewards' Movement is organising a mass meeting of dock workers to be held at the Poplar Hippodrome on Sunday, January 12th, at 11 A.M., for the purpose of enabling the Joint Standing Committee of Shipping Trades (London E. District) to state their views re the demand for fifteen shillings increase for all trades. The arrangements are that two representatives from the official body will state the case, and the meeting will be invited to discuss the position. All workers should attend.

SOLDIERS COUNCILS ?

QUITE a sensation was caused by the comedy of the Guards Colours. It appears from the press reports that the Colours were carried from Wellington Barracks with the usual ceremony. "The troops," we are told, "were in church parade order," for which only belts and side arms are necessary. Bayonets were fixed and swords drawn at 10 o'clock, and sixty non.-coms. were detailed to receive the colours. The band played Elgar's 'Land of Hope and Glory,' and the usual crowd of people was present to see the performance.

The start from Birdcage Walk was in perfect order, and the said colours duly departed for Charing Cross en route for Cologne. Some "hitch" occurred, however, in consequence of which the colours got no further than Charing Cross. What was the "hitch"? That's the vital question. The papers are strangely reticent about it, but we learn that at Folkestone, some men had obtained an extension of leave to give them time to communicate with the local committees, their pre-war employers consenting to take them back. Other men, to whom no extension had been given, claimed to be entitled to get leave on the same grounds.

The official statement reads as follows:—"The trouble which has arisen during the last two days among the troops returning to France from England has been satisfactorily settled this evening, after a long conference between the General Officer Commanding the Eastern Command and representatives of the men. The War Office authorities and officials of the Demobilisation Department of the Ministry of Labour are engaged in investigating each case individually at Folkestone" (*National News*).

The National News further informs us that: "Ten thousand soldiers paraded the streets of Folkestone to-day, and, after the procession was over, several meetings were held. At one of these several delegates were selected to confer with the authorities. The trouble is said to have arisen over questions connected with demobilisation."

From these few facts it would seem that the soldiers are forming councils and are disregarding the time-honoured regulations that no man in uniform shall speak in public.

This manifestation of revolt on the part of the troops and of the sailors is most welcome, and on behalf of the Workers' Committee movement I extend to them the hand of comradeship, and assure them of the wholehearted support of the thinking workers in any action they may take, however drastic. Get on with the Soldiers' and Sailors' Councils and link up with the Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committee Movement ! !

RUSSIA.

"What are we going to do about it?" *The Herald* asks referring to the Allied war against Socialist Russia.

The *only* thing that can be done is to back up the conference convened by the S.L.P. and the L.W.C. that is being held at the Memorial Hall on Saturday, January 18th. The arrangements are now completed. The Conference opens at 10 A.M. and will continue, with an interval for lunch, until 5 o'clock. W. F. Watson will preside. It is anticipated that 500 delegates will be present. *The capitalist press is barred*, but the Socialists papers are invited to send representatives as fraternal delegates and foreign comrades and all others interested are invited to apply for a fraternal delegate's card.

The Mass Meeting will commence at 7.30 (doors open at 6.30) with Arthur MacManus in the chair. The speakers are Comrades Luhani, W. Paul, Sylvia Pankhurst, David Ramsay, Ellen Wilkinson and W. F. Watson. There will be music, under the direction of Cedar Paul, between 6.30 and 7.30, the artists being, Muriel Davenport, pianist; Edward Soermus, violinist; Cedar Paul, vocalist. Admission is free and no tickets are required. Adequate arrangements have been made for an overflow meeting should it be necessary.

German Working Women in Wartime.

On September 27th the Prussian factory inspectors' reports showed that whilst there had been a decline of 26.5 per cent in the number of male industrial workers, the number of women over eighteen in industry has increased by 18.4 per cent, whilst the number of younger women workers had increased by 17 per cent. Of children under fourteen, the increase had been 68 per cent, but the figure is less serious than it might seem at first sight, seeing that before the war the extent of child labour was not large. The actual number of children at work during 1917 in Prussia was 6,012. On the other hand it must be remembered that these figures relate only to factories, and take no account of the enormous increase in child labour in petty workshops, in home industry, and on the land. The total number of wage earning women in Germany last summer was stated to be nearly 5 million. The article from which I am quoting refers to the general failure during the war to enforce the laws for the protection of women in industry, above all as regards overtime and night shifts.

We note with interest that there are a few German towns in which our socialist comrades have been endeavouring to carry on pre-war activities for the benefit of working-class children. There is a report from Offenbach of the organisa- of three country excursions every week during August and September, at a total cost of £500, the money being raised by collections.

TOPSYTURVYDOM IN EDUCATION.

Remarkable news comes from Barmen, the great centre of textile and other industries in Rhenish Prussia, a town with a population well on towards 200,000. Here the municipal council, acting on a suggestion from the representatives of the central government, has decided upon the gradual closing down of the teachers' training college. Since 1905 a decline in the birth rate has been conspicuous, and since 1912 this decline has had its effect in a comparative reduction in the number of children of school age. At the present moment forty qualified women teachers from the Barmen college have no immediate prospect of employment. We are told that no notable improvement in the chances of employment can be speedily anticipated even should there be a marked improvement (!) in population conditions after the war, for there are actually 11,000 unemployed women teachers in Prussia at the present time. Without going into the population question, one may suggest that the socialist solution of the disparity between the number of pupils and the supply of teachers would be to reduce the size of the classes— a reform long urged by all practical educationists. Whether the finances of the new German revolutionary governments will render such a measure practicable will, of course, largely depend upon whether the victors in the late struggle attempt to make the vanquished pay the war costs of both the capitalist groups.

REORGANISATION IN BOLSHEVIK RUSSIA.

German institutions are in the melting pot. Despite the effective labours of the censorship, we have ground for the encouraging belief that socialist reorganisation is proceeding apace in Bolshevik Russia. Take, for example, Alexandra Kollontay's work as Commissar for Public Welfare. She did not feel able to make a clean sweep of the poor relief which had been carried on by the imperial and provisional governments, for there was a legacy of poor to be taken over. Her first step was to give self-government to all the state institutions under the care of her department, all the hospitals, almshouses, and so on—exception naturally being made of the insane asylums. Orphanages have been replaced by a boarding-out system and by adoption, the children being sent to country homes. The care and vocational training of the vast numbers of wounded and crippled soldiers is under her direction. Beginning in Petrograd, whilst making similar plans for other cities, she has taken over a large government building, turning it into a Palace of Motherhood, a sort of glorified lying-in hospital, where rest before and after confinement is combined with mothercraft instruction. This institution, too, is self-governing. John Reed, to whom we are indebted for this first-hand information, tells us that large schemes of motherhood pensioning were being worked out when he left Russia.

CEDAR PAUL.

SOLDIERS' AND SAILORS' WIVES PROTEST AGAINST INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA.

The Merton Committee of Soldiers' and Sailors' Wives and Dependants has written to Lloyd George demanding the immediate withdrawal of Allied troops from Russia, and that the Russian people be left to manage their own affairs as they think best. They further say that "during the past four years the wives and dependants of men who have preserved the life and wealth of this country have been allowed to exist on a starvation allowance which has practically been nullified by the almost famine prices *arranged and controlled by the Government*. That the Civil Liabilities and Pensions Committees have proved inefficient and expensive, and have helped people who before the war were in a position to put by for a rainy day, and improvident people who purchased on the hire instalment plan, while the hard working people who struggled to keep clear of debt have been left to get on as best they can.

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE.

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

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REVOLUTION AND THE HOUSING QUESTION.

Poverty and decay, grim comrades, are rife in Poplar. Children grow warped and stunted there; adults die off before their time. More than the outer body, by which men and women are identified, the inner being suffers, that greatest injury none can assess.

The East India Dock Road is dismal. There is the long, blank wall of the dock over which, between and above the bulky warehouses, the masts of ships peep here and there. There are the great, prison-like dock gates, to which, beside the habitual dockers, unemployed men from all sections of industry at some time come, seeking, too often in vain, a casual job. By the great gates meetings are held, the speakers voices all but drowned by the noisy clatter of the electric trams. Here riots have taken place.

But this, as it were, is the front door into Poplar. Away from this main road are meaner, dingier streets, where the wronged people live herded together in the hideous dilapidation of old, neglected buildings, darkened by soot, bug-ridden, structurally only fit to be inhabited by sewer rats, and yet high rents are charged for them. "He never forgets to come round for his rent," the women say.

The side streets running from the High Street are as densely populated as a rabbit warren. The little, two-storied houses in ——— Street, owned by a worthy Borough Councillor, vie with each other in their decay. Some of the passage doors are open and one can look right into the little yards behind. Walk through and see the broken fences, the sunken paving in which deep pools collect, the row of closets, some with the doors half broken away from long exposure, overmuch handling, and many years' lack of paint. From these hovels the poor people are overflowing into the streets. In spite of the drizzling rain and the sticky black mud under foot, they must have air. Two women are sadly condoling together. She with the strange, stunned look murmurs: "My two sons were killed within a month." The Labour Party election posters are still on the walls, appealing to her to "Vote for the men and women who gave" her "victory." Where is her victory?

The blight of poverty is everywhere. Here and there cheap little cotton flags, the Union Jack and the colours of the Allies, are hung from a window or on a clothes line across the street, to welcome some returning soldier. They trail grimy and limp, serving to emphasise the general dejection.

In the High Street shop after shop stands empty, literally falling to pieces for lack of small repairs and hastened to their end by ragged children who, finding their way in—no bolts and locks deter them—tear away the woodwork from the floors, skirtings, and window frames and take it home to mother when she lacks the wherewithal to make a fire, or build for themselves fires in the street—their playground. They fan the smouldering sticks into flame with their caps, and in the dull, grey winter afternoons, with early dusk creeping upon them, they sit warming themselves, their faces glowing, happier than princes. Even the walls of the empty houses the children, in time, demolish, breaking away the bricks and using them as tools and missiles. A breach has been made in the high wall behind one of the corner shops, and a big hole gapes too in the rear wall of the house. Now the little boys are standing far back in the yard, they have made so easy to enter from the street, and are shying pieces of brick into or at the house, taking a careful aim at this point or that; learning to throw and striving, as almost every manchild does, to acquire skill in this most elemental art.

There are no parks or playgrounds near. The crowded, tiny homes do not provide the necessities of healthy childhood. Those who look back towards infancy at a past in which comfortable clothes and shoes, a garden, and yearly country or seaside holidays were things simply taken for granted, and father, or mother, or someone else, was always providing books and tools and games, can with difficulty comprehend the lives of children who are saved from dull apathy by mere destruction.

These shops are empty because the rents are too high for any trade that can be done here, or for working-class families to occupy as houses. Sometimes, to save his property from utter destruction, the owner, when the place is in an advanced stage of decay, is willing to allow a family to occupy a part of it at a reduced rent on condition of taking care of the premises. "He offered to let my sister take care of that miserable old place and pay him 7*s.* a week," a man tells us, pointing to a terribly dilapidated shop. The landlords have not thought it worth while to repair their property; they have not wanted to spend on it any of the money they have drawn from their tenants and so the property itself is disappearing. Here and there some dignified old house, with an imposing door, speaks to us from the past; the knocker of one of them is the beautiful head of a woman with finely-wrought vine leaves in her hair.

In a small, closed-in court you may discover Hanbury Buildings. One mounts to the dwellings by a narrow stone staircase, and at the top of the first steep flight one is confronted by the open doors of three W.C.s, all of which are out of order. To the left of these is a small washhouse, with a water-tap and copper for boiling clothes; to the left is a narrow, dark passage where, by feeling with one's hands, one discovers the doors of the two-roomed apartments in which the tenants are living. The rent of these apartments varies from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.* 6*d.* a week. Seven families share the copper and the W.C.s and the women of the seven families take turns to clean them. The two small rooms occupied by each family open from each other without a door between. There is no water in the apartments; it has to be carried from the washhouse. The light in most of the rooms is dim, owing to the surrounding buildings. The rain beating on the stairway, the many people who pass up and down to the various floors—there are seven families on each story—the dripping from the tap in the washhouse used by so many people, make the stone floor of the dark passage wet and muddy. Smoke pours from the wash-house. The socket holding the basin in which the clothes are boiled is broken away and through the holes the fierce flames rise up. One must take care not to burn oneself in using this boiler!

"How did it get into this condition?"

"Nothing's been done to it for a long time and the gambling boys come here at night to play; they helped to break it."

"Who are they? Do they live here?"

"Some of them live here; others not. They're just lads with nowhere else to go."

"Come here and see how these places need doing up! Look at the wet coming in there and there." "Aren't the rooms small?" "Aren't they dark?" "I wouldn't stay there, if I could find another house anywhere"—so the tenants greet us.

One woman rises from her knees, putting aside her pail and scrubbing brush. She has two children and is expecting a third. She works all day at Morton's biscuit and preserving factory, because her husband's wage is too small to maintain her household, and coming home at night, she cooks, and cleans, and washes, and mends. Her elder child goes to school; she pays 8*s.* a week fo a woman who takes care of the younger. "That is a great deal for you to pay?" "Yes, but I must have her properly looked after—I couldn't go out to work if I wasn't sure she was all right!" She has not yet returned to the factory after the Christmas holiday but she goes back to-morrow. Her tiny bed-sitting-room is wonderfully clean and wonderfully arranged. The mantelpiece is draped with red plush, the mirror above is framed, for the Christmas season, with red and white crinkled paper. Her neighbours draw our attention to her decorations and express their admiration. She is pleased, but she regards ruefully her room nevertheless. She has been trying to leave the place for two years, but newcomers are everywhere waiting to occupy the rooms of outgoing tenants and house agents look with disfavour on people coming from ———. "The Buildings have got a bad name"; "I don't know why; we are all clean here!" the other women chime in. Moreover, the agent who collects the rents does not furnish the tenants with a rent-book, and working people cannot get houses unless they can produce a rent-book showing that no arrears are owing. "I've asked him, and asked him for a rent-book, and he promises I shall have one, but that's all." "I wouldn't stay here but for the children, but wherever you go it is: 'Sorry, we don't take children.'" Every woman tells a similar tale.

One woman shows us that her husband has stripped the torn, dirty paper from the lower part of the walls, painted them a dark, bright green, and finished off the edge of the wallpaper with a border pattern. Widows and women whose husbands are away (even soldiers' wives) are not much favoured as tenants. A family is preferred in which there is a handy man who will keep the property in repair without cost to the landlord, fitting new locks, mending broken woodwork, even patching up broken sinks, hearthstones, and doorsteps with cement. A business-like, middle-aged woman twelve years ago had the good fortune to secure two rooms at the front of the building where there is more light and air. She looks the healthier for it, though she has to go down a flight of steps to the lower floor to fetch water. "Look at my ceiling," she says, "look at the walls! It is three years since he half-papered the walls and he's done nothing since! Look at it! Doesn't it take the heart out of you?" The bed, pushed close against the window, half blocks the entrance doorway, but the bed could be squeezed into no other place. Withdrawing her eyes from the dirty ceiling she fixes them with a sigh of relief on the clean honey-comb quilt and white vallances. She says that she is expecting her two sons home from the front and we wonder where she will find room for them. "They won't bring their young women to a place like this!" she says bitterly. "I've been wanting to move from here ever since I came, but rooms are so scarce and I'm afraid to take a whole house and let off part of it, because I couldn't afford to pay the rent if the other people should keep me waiting."

Marvellous that women who have lived for years in these wretched tenements should still retain a genuine enthusiasm for home-making, still grasp at any chance to beautify their rooms, still toil, even when excessively tired by outside labour, to keep them clean!

Close by, across the High Street, is a narrow doorway leading to a little alley in which is a row of cottages. "I thought these houses were condemned," someone says to an old woman standing on the first doorstep. "Oh, no," she says eagerly, "they're all right. Oh, mine is beautiful!" She is afraid that if her cottage were condemned she would never get another. She knows that again and again where slum property has been demolished, no provision has been made for the evicted tenants.

In busy Chrisp Street, where anxious women hurry to and fro from shop to shop, comes a

REVOLUTION AND THE HOUSING QUESTION continued.

woman looking a shade more worn and anxious than the rest. Beside her is a child with skin like old ivory, delicately rose tinted, dark Eastern eyes bright as a bird's, but curiously flat in shape to Western sight, and, contrasting with these, soft, brown, English curls. "A little China girl with an English mother," someone says.

At the end of Poplar High Street one passes into Penny Fields in the Chinese quarter. The men—one rarely sees a Chinese woman in the street—look pinched and cold. But, coming into China Town, one has passed from the direst of decay to something brighter. The Chinese have cleaned up the old, tumble-down property they occupy. Their shops are arranged with quiet tidiness, little furniture, and a, perhaps unconscious, facility for the picturesque. In the fish shop hangs a wonderful dried flying-fish that seems to have flown straight out of a fairy tale. A grocer has put two lovely vases in his window. In the "Chinese English" restaurant, though the thick, clumsy, white cups one might find in any fifth-rate eating-house are provided for British customers, handleless bowls of fine china, charmingly painted, are supplied to the Chinese.

It is said that East End landlords exact higher rents from Chinese than from British tenants, and flagrantly violate the Rent Act where the former are concerned. But ask the Chinese who are standing at the doors if this is so. However patiently you try to explain, they will tell you nothing and you will presently realise that they are afraid of you, and of their British neighbours in general. There have been anti-Chinese riots in Poplar! The sordid aspects of competitive Capitalism poison the relationship of the Chinese immigrants and the native East Enders. The Chinese can be induced to work on ship more cheaply than the British—there is a fruitful source of trouble. Some of the Chinese are trafficking in opium—a traffic in which they are joined by British men and women, as eager as they to make money out of it. Such trading on weakness and folly will disappear with the Capitalist system.

By dreary ways one passes from Penny Fields to the Isle of Dogs—"The Island," as we call it in the East End. Here we find still more empty houses, side by side with overcrowding. In one great block of small dwellings two-thirds of the houses are empty, and the children are busy as bees, eagerly destructive, regarding every brick they dislodge as a potential treasure.

A woman in one of these houses tells us she has heard they are all to be pulled down in order that an extension to the neighbouring factory may be built on the site. During heavy rains, she says, these houses are flooded. Sometimes the tenants see the wave of the oncoming flood as it comes rushing down the street, and are able to drag their most precious furniture upstairs before the water reaches them; sometimes it catches them unawares. When last it came the flood rose to the height of the fourth stair of this woman's house. The boards of the entrance passage floor rose with the water and floated about. The oilcloth and many other things were spoiled—no compensation was paid. She would like to leave the house, but she does not know where to find another, or what to do if it is pulled down. She cannot think what all her neighbours will do. Her daughter was married during the war, and learnt after the armistice was signed that her husband had been killed, the widow stands by nursing their first baby, whom the father will never see. There is a dull, hopeless look in her pale face.

The elder woman discusses matters with a shrewd, clear intelligence. She has had a large family of children, her life has been all toil and hardship, and prospects do not brighten. She complains that poor people are blamed for their poverty and often insulted by the well-to-do, who pretend to help them. For years this daughter was a regular attender at the Sunday school and the evening classes at the religious settlement near by. The ladies of the settlement had milk and other necessaries to dispense to the needy. Once when the father of the family was out of work and one of the youngest children lay seriously ill with penumonia, the mother applied for a grant of milk for that child. She was asked: "Is any member of the household working?" She replied that one daughter was at work. "You know," she says, "the few shillings girls earned before the war." She was told that as her daughter was in employment they would be able to manage; the milk was refused. She gave birth to her youngest child at a maternity hospital, and when she left, the nurse advised her to take half a pint of stout each day in two portions. She followed this advise, and also took her baby weekly to the Infant Welfare Centre, where milk for the child was supplied to her. But one day, a "lady" from the centre saw her coming home with her stout and as the result the baby's milk was immediately stopped. The "ladies" told her they were sorry to see that she had "come down so," as she had been "well brought up." She explained that the nurse had advised her to take stout, but her excuses were brushed aside. "If I had been a loose woman, always in and out of public houses, they would have done all sorts of things for me to reclaim me." She smiled a little grimly. Her daughter added: "Yes, that is true; I have seen it happen."

We told them that in Russia "ladies" can no more scold and patronise poor women, for there, class distinctions are done away with and both riches and poverty are being abolished. We told them that the Russian Workers' Councils are taking over the empty houses and putting into them whoever needs a house, without charging tenants any rent at all if they are too poor to pay. Their poverty itself can only be temporary, since there is an equal wage for all, and people who are ill or out of work are paid at the same rate. Until as many houses as the people of free Russia desire can be built, an equal plan of rationing has been established, by which every family is entitled to one room for each adult member of the household and one room for two children. We told these women, too, that the land and the industries of Russia are now owned by the whole people and are managed by those who work them; that all education is free; that in two years' time no one under the age of 20 will be working for a living, and that everyone's child will go to the University or take up some other course of training.

"Really? And will it all come here too?" they asked with radiant faces.

"Yes, here too, in England, even in Poplar, Socialism is swiftly coming. It alone brings with it the hope, the certainty, of transforming the East End."

One of the election cries of the Lloyd George Coalition was Housing Reform, but with what insurmountable obstacles are those tinkering reformers faced who are unprepared to abolish the Capitalist system.

The London County Council has built some hideous, barrack dwellings, many, many stories high, without lifts, and with long, steep flights of steps, up which tired mothers must climb, carrying both babies and parcels. No gardens are attached to these dwellings; only paved yards, enclosed by high, ugly buildings. Uncomfortable as they are, the rents of the L.C.C. dwellings are so high that the manual labourer with a large family cannot afford to live in them.

In giving evidence before the National Birthrate Commission in 1916, Mr. Berry, Assistant Housing Manager to the L.C.C., explained that the L.C.C. only allows two adults per room to occupy its tenements; children under 5 years not being counted, and children under 10 years counted as half an adult. That standard permits what ought to be considered gross overcrowding; it means that two adults and three or four children will often be found living in a single room. Nevertheless, rents are such, and wages are such, that Mr. Berry had to report that families were constantly having to leave the L.C.C. dwellings, because they could not afford to hire enough rooms, even to comply with this low standard of accommodation. In 1916 the L.C.C. rents were:—

	s.	d.		s.	d.
1 room	2	3	to	6	0
2 rooms	4	6	to	8	6
3 rooms	6	0	to	11	6
4 rooms	7	0	to	13	0
5 rooms	10	6	to	14	0
6 rooms	12	6	to	13	0

Why are dwellings built by the L.C.C. and the municipal authorities so highly rented and why must they be great barracks, the most lately built of which is always the highest? As every one knows, it is because those who have somehow acquired the land will only sell it or let it at an enormous price. Mr. Winch, the Secretary of the Guinness Trust, informed the same Birthrate Commission that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had charged the Trust £11,000 per acre for land to be used for workers' dwellings, stating they had let it go cheaply on that account. Moreover, when the Local Authorities build dwellings for the workers they borrow money for the purpose and pay interest on the loan, and establish a fund for paying back the loan. They usually employ a contractor to build the houses who makes a profit on the undertaking, or even if they avoid employing a contractor they buy materials for the building from people who are making big profits. The landlords and profiteers insist on making gain for themselves out of the worker's house, and as the workers receiving the lowest wages cannot afford to pay the rents of the new dwellings, they are obliged to live in old houses, built at a time when landlords and profiteers were content with smaller gains.

When the London County Council finds that, on the one hand, it has several applicants who can only afford to pay for a two-roomed flat, and, on the other hand, it has a three-roomed flat for which no applicant can afford to pay, it takes the anti-social course of sealing up one of of the rooms in order that it cannot be used, and then it lets the flat for the price of two rooms. It may be that the husband and wife who rent that flat with its sealed-up room, have four children, one of whom is nearly 5 years' old. In a short time the child has a birthday, and the parents, who are unable to pay for the extra room, are obliged to leave, as they have now passed the L.C.C. overcrowding limit. In Petrograd those two people, whether they were able to pay rent or not, would be entitled with their children to four rooms, and if they were short of these things, furniture, fuel, and light would be freely provided for them. In Petrograd those people would be treated as members of the human family; in London they are mere units out of whom money is to be made. This is why some people want British working men sent to fight against the Russian workers—lest they should learn by example to demand what the Russian workers have.

"But," a voice protests, "if you put SOME people into a decent house they would not take care of it." Probably not, if you put them into it with their present income which does not suffice adequately to feed and clothe the family and to keep it clean, to say nothing of providing it with education and recreation. But if you set up an equal wage for all, miners and railwaymen, teachers and scavengers, bank managers and Prime Ministers; if you added an equal wage and equal hours of labour for all, and the certainty of being supplied with a good house and a good education, you would find that the "*some* people" who would not know how to live decently in a decent house would certainly be very few; we do not really believe they would exist. But in a generation, at most, they would become extinct.

E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Workers' Socialist Federation.

H. DEVINE

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Chair—SYLVIA PANKHURST.

On FRIDAY, 24th JANUARY, 1919, at 8 p.m., At CAXTON HALL, Caxton Street, Westminster. (1 min. St. James' Park und. and Victoria St

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RUSSIAN WORKERS AND THE CONTROL OF INDUSTRY.

THE People's Russian Information Bureau is in a position to give exact facts with respect to the progress made by the nationalisation of industry under the Soviet Government.

It must be observed that the policy of nationalisation, though, of course, an integral part of world-wide Socialist policy, in the actual development of events in Russia, *was originally forced upon the Soviet regime by the capitalists themselves.* Even before the Bolshevik revolution of November, 1917, the Russian capitalists had begun a policy of *sabotage against their own works and mills*, in order, as one of them publicly stated, that the "bony hand of hunger might seize the Revolution by the throat" and strangle it. With this end in view manufacturers began shutting down their works, hiding away raw material, fuel and essential parts of machinery. When threatened by reprisals on the part of the workers, they frequently absconded, leaving the managers to settle with the workers as best they could.

It was this sabotage, more than anything else, which caused the workers to demand the establishment of the workers' control of industry. After the Bolshevik revolution and the assumption of entire power by the Soviets, the criminal policy of the capitalists assumed enormous dimensions. In some places they resisted the establishment of workers' control committees; in others they closed the works altogether. When the employers chose to adopt the former course, the Soviets sequestrated the factory for the benefit of the community, just as, in this country, it has happened more than once during the war, that when employers have refused to come to terms with their workpeople the factory has been taken over under the Munitions Act. When the Russian employer took the second course and abandoned his factory the Soviet simply declared it national property, there being, in the absence of the owner, no other way of continuing production and giving employment to the workpeople.

Broadly speaking, more than 70 per cent of the industrial concerns nationalised during the first six months of the Soviet regime, became State property, for one or the other of the two reasons given above. Altogether 513 concerns were nationalised between November, 1917, and June, 1918, of which 218, or 42 per cent, belonged to the mining and metallurgical groups, 62 to the paper-making and wood-working industries, 42 to the chemical group, and 26 to the textile industry.

The fact that the bulk of the works thus expropriated belonged to the mining and metallurgical industries, in itself, indicates the origin of the nationalisation policy of the Soviet regime, since in no other branch of industry are the capitalist magnates so arrogant, so imperious, and so powerful, as in those mentioned. It is also characteristic that most of the work of nationalisation was carried out by the Regional Economic Councils and local Soviets on their own initiative. Two hundred and sixty-four concerns or more than one-half of the total were nationalised by the Regional Economic Councils, 123 concerns, or 24 per cent, by the local Soviets, whilst the central Soviet Government itself, the Council of People's Commissaries nationalised only 100 concerns, or 24 per cent. This shows that the policy of nationalisation, so far from being the diabolical invention of Lenin or Trotsky, was essentially the policy of the masses themselves, and that the masses were actually forced to adopt it from sheer necessity because of the sabotage practised by the capitalists.

It was at the end of this process, and not at its beginning, that the central authorities intervened. It is true that one of the earliest acts of the Bolshevik Government was to nationalise the banks, but even this measure had less to do with the economic than with the political policy of the new regime, which aimed by it a destructive blow at the financial strongholds of Imperialism and War. The Soviet Government found itself, without asking, in possession of numerous concerns between which there was no visible connection, which were worked on no common plan, were sometimes badly managed by inexperienced local Soviets, and were daily increasing in number through the sporadic revolts of the capitalists and consequent necessary reprisals by the workers. Then the Government saw that the least it could do was to introduce system into the general management, and put it on a broad economic and administrative basis.

Towards the end of May, 1918, the first national congress of local Economic Councils took place, and, after a thorough discussion of the problem, adopted a resolution stating:—

> In the organisation of industry the completion of the work of nationalisation is indispensable. It is necessary to pass from the nationalisation of individual concerns to the nationalisation of entire branches of industry, and in the first place, of the metallurgical machine construction, chemical, naphtha and textile industries. The carrying out of the nationalisation policy must be free from fortuitous and accidental elements, and must be initiated and controlled by (1) either the Supreme Economic Council (2) the Council of People's Commissaries on the proposals of the Supreme Economic Council."

Acting on these instructions the Supreme Economic Council drew up a number of schemes for nationalisation, which were afterwards sanctioned by the Council of People's Commissaries, and embodied by it in a decree dated June 28th, 1918. This decree provides for the nationalisa- of the entire mining industry (including gold mining, in which, it may be incidentally observed, British capitalists are heavily interested), also of all the largest concerns in all other industries. By way of gratuitous lease, as it were, it leaves the concerns in the hands of their former owners and directors until further notice.

In view of the cardinal importance of this decree, a translation of it is given below. No details are as yet available as to the results and working of the industries nationalised under the new system; time having been too short to secure conclusive reports. Numerous measures, for raising the productive capacity of labour and for the installation everywhere of competent administrative and controlling machinery have, however, been carried out by the Supreme Economic Council and its local organs. Unfortunately, all the chief sources of fuel and raw material have been entirely cut off since last summer by the action of the Allies and their reactionary protégés in Siberia and the South.

DECREE OF THE COUNCIL OF PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIES.

With a view to drastic action for ending the disorganisation in the economic system and the food supply, as well as to consolidate the dictatorship by the working class and poor peasantry, the Council of People's Commissaries has decreed:

I. To proclaim as the property of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic the following industrial and commercial undertakings, situated in the territory of the Soviet Republic, with all their respective funds and properties of every kind.

IN THE MINING INDUSTRY.

1. All concerns belonging to joint-stock and other companies, which are engaged in the extraction of mineral fuel, such as coal, brown coal, lygnite, anthracite, &c.
2. All concerns belonging to joint-stock and other companies engaged in the extraction of iron and copper ore.
3. All concerns engaged in the extraction of platinum.
4. All concerns engaged in the extraction of silver, lead, and zinc.
5. All concerns engaged in the extraction of wolfram.
6. All concerns in the asbestos industry.
7. The following gold-extracting concerns:—

(*a*) Lena Gold Company.
(*b*) The Kotchkar Companies.
(*c*) The Upper Amur Company.
(*d*) The Amur Company.
(*e*) The Russian Gold Company.
(*f*) The Fedorovskoe Company.
(*g*) The Southern Siberian Company.
(*h*) The Amgun Company.
(*i*) The Miass Company.
(*j*) The Southern Altai Company.
(*k*) The Olkhovskoe Company.
(*l*) The "Altai" Company.
(*m*) The Lower Selenchinsk Company.
(*n*) The Tsimansk Company.
(*o*) The Mariinsk Company.
(*p*) Elstoff & Levashoff Company.
(*q*) The "Draga" Company.
(*r*) The Okhotsk Company.
(*s*) The Aydyr-Kwarken District.
(*t*) The Moscow Forest Company.
(*u*) The Trans-Uralian Mining Company.

8. The following concerns engaged in the salt-extracting industry:—

(*a*) The Kuli Lake Salt Extracting Company.
(*b*) The Ter-Avanessoff industry at Molla-Kara.
(*c*) All the salt industries in the Ussol district.

FOREIGN COMMERCIAL POLICY OF THE NEW RUSSIA.

(*Translated by* EDEN AND CEDAR PAUL *from 'Avanti,' the organ of the Italian Socialist Party.*)

One of the most difficult problems which the Soviet Government has to face is that of commercial policy. The Economic Council has frequently discussed the problem. The All-Russian Congress of Economic Councils has just had the matter under consideration, and has approved the following propositions, formulated by Comrade Vronski:—

1. The productive forces of all the countries of the world have been exhausted by the imperialistic war of the last four years. The scarcity of commodities is the outcome of this exhaustion, and will remain a characteristic of the economy of every country for some years to come. An essential transformation of foreign commerce is in progress. Apart altogether from military successes, the foreign commercial policy of every country will have to be mainly concerned, not so much with seeking new markets, as with providing essential articles for home consumption and manufacture.

2. Before the war the commercial policy of Russia aimed at promoting the export of agricultural produce and at hindering the import of manufactured articles, this latter in the interest of the so-called "patriotic industry." Raw materials were exported without any work having been done upon them; were exported, that is to say, in conditions most unfavourable to Russia. The export of cereals was not the outcome of superabundance, but depended solely upon the fiscal policy of the State. Indeed all this export was not determined by our wealth in natural treasures, but by our poverty.

3. The war and the revolution have notably altered Russia's position in the world market. Prior to the war, the fiscal and protectionist policy of our country opposed the import of manufactured products and favoured the export of cereals and raw materials. In the future, the foreign commerce of Russia ought to be guided by precisely opposite aims, by an endeavour to restrict the export of foodstuffs and raw materials, and by an attempt to increase the import of industrial products (means of production) in order to render possible the reorganisation of our economic life.

4. The most urgent requisites for foreign commerce are:—

(*a*) The safeguarding of the principal branches of industry in which raw materials are worked up. The manufacture of agricultural machinery. Before all, the promotion of railway traffic, of agriculture, of textiles, leather manufactures, and the timber trade.

(*b*) Restriction of the import of articles of primary necessity (including footgear).

(*c*) Prohibition of the import of articles of luxury. Temporarily it may be necessary to permit the import of foodstuffs for general consumption.

5. An essential rule for export from Russia is that it should be based upon the exchange of commodities. Products which are to be sold abroad will have their values calculated in foreign currency, and it will be incumbent upon the foreign country to send back to Russia an equivalent quantity of its own products. For the ensuing year, our plans of export from Russia chiefly concern the following articles: wood, linen, hemp, silk, lubricants, leather, hides, tobacco, and metals. In payment for implements of production imported into Russia, it might be possible to give concessions in certain regions, on condition that the Socialist laws remain obligatory upon the concessionaries, and that the Government retains the right to participate in the exploitation.

6. Internal transformations lead to corresponding changes in foreign commerce. Since every import determines an export, foreign commerce must be systematically regulated. Current methods (protection by means of tariffs, &c.) are inadequate. The system of concessions leaves the initiative to private

Continued on back page.

QUESTIONS OF THE DAY.

THE DEMOBILISATION MUDDLE.

THE GOVERNMENT IN A CLEFT STICK. EITHER COURSE LEADS TOWARDS REVOLUTION.

The Government is in difficulties. If it demoblises the whole army it cannot crush the Workers' and Soldiers' Council in Russia and Germany. Moreover, if it demobilises the soldiers it will flood the Labour market and cause unemployment; and the workers, with the example before them of how Soviet Russia deals with the problems of reconstruction, must inevitably desire to follow their Russian comrades in abolishing the capitalist system and replacing it by Socialism. Therefore, to demobilise the army is to hasten the Socialist Revolution!

On the other hand, to refuse to demobilise the army is also to produce Revolution. Everywhere the soldiers are protesting against being kept away from their homes now that the war with the old rulers of the Central Empires has come to an end. The soldiers kept in the army against their will, naturally ask why; and discover that they may be ordered to overthrow Socialism in Europe. They do not wish to continue fighting with that object. The soldiers began by protesting, and found that when their protests were made by sufficient numbers, they were as immune from punishment as any body of civilian workers. But the soldiers have done more than protested; they have in some cases actually gone on strike. Moreover, they are forming a union, not of discharged men, but of men still in the army.

When the police went on strike we predicted that a soldiers' strike would probably follow.

THE RAILWAY STRIKE.

The Brighton Railway strike is spreading. The workers are demanding pay for the time spent in travelling from Lancing to Brighton where the works are. The Railway Company declares that such a strike cannot be tolerated, but it is as nothing to the demands that the workers, conscious of their power, will presently make. The workers in the army and navy and in civilian occpuations are beginning at last to realise that by their labour and by their numbers, they possess an all compelling power. The workers of Russia first grasped this truth, but the movement is world-wide; a blow for Socialism and liberty in Britain is a blow for those very things in Russia; a blow for Socialism and liberty in Russia is a blow for them in England.

A CONTENTED PORTER.

A railway porter writing in *The Observer* explains that his wages have gradully risen from 17*s.* a week in 1913 to £2 13*s.* 8*d.* at the present time. The cost of living has also risen. His hours of labour were 84 per week in 1913; they are now 66. He says:—

"From Sunday, December 30, 1917, up to and including Saturday, December 28th, 1918, the following is my year's record of work and play:—

"Number of week days worked	277
"Number of Sundays worked	26
"Total days worked	303
"Number of Sundays off duty	26
"Number of days sick and unable to work	20
"Number of days laid up with accident ..	6
"Number of holidays..	9
"Grand Total	364

"I submit that the above is not a bad record for a man in his sixtieth year."

We do not find much "play" about this record. It is probable that if the porter had had 29 days holiday, instead of 9, he would not have been at home ill as he was on 20 days. A railway director would consider 29 days' holiday in a year quite an impossibly small allowance. Our porter friend says:—

"My duties are by no means light. They consist of sweeping the station platforms, washing and cleaning every morning the gentlemen's lavatory, burnishing the brasswork, loading and unloading heavy churns of milk, loading sides of beef, carcases of sheep and heavy boxes of fish, attending to the trains, sometimes coupling up, and hauling luggage about. Frequently on arrival home I go straight to bed, being thoroughly tired out."

Yet our friend is apparently satisfied' Ah, well! he belongs to a generation of workers that is almost past and we expect that very soon he will witness changes that will greatly surprise him. We expect he will be a Bolshevik with his workmates, *when the Social Revolution comes.*

THE INTERNATIONAL.

The International Labour and Socialist Conference which is arranged for Lausanne on January 13th, unless it is prevented from meeting by the world capitalists, will serve at least one useful purpose: it will show us how many of those who have hitherto been recognised as the leaders of Socialism in the various countries are really Socialists at all. Mr. Henderson has stated that the mission of the International Conference is to draw up a programme of International Labour Legislation. Is it his desire to divert the attention of the delegates from anything that may be controversial and, above all, from the delicate question of peace terms? But International Labour Legislation is a subject which Mr. Henderson is likely to find by no means non-controversial. The American Federation of Labour is already protesting against Mr. Henderson's proposal for an International Tribunal to adjust Labour conditions, on the ground that it might tend to reduce wages in the U.S.A. to the European level. But, surely, some genuine Socialist voices will be raised against the Lloyd Georgist reformism, with which Mr. Henderson desires to replace the ideal of the world for the workers and an international federation of workers' republics.

MARSHAL FOCH'S THREAT.

The Daily News of January 2nd published the following paragraph:—

COPENHAGEN, Wednesday.—A report from Berlin to the "Politiken" states that Marshal Foch's representative at the Armistice Commission declared that if the Radical elements in Germany took over power, for instance, the Independents, the Allies would break off all negotiations and consider the preliminary peace at an end.—Exchange.

The Independents do not go so far as the Bolsheviki. The Allies have therefore taken a stand against even a comparatively mild form of Socialism being established in Germany.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

At the Peace Conference Great Britain is to be represented by "the Old Gang." We borrow the phrase from Mr. Lloyd George's party, since it aptly describes the situation. Lloyd George, Balfour and Bonar Law have received no instructions from the British people as to how they shall act; they refused to allow Parliament to discuss the peace terms with them. They may, however, have received very definite instructions from the great capitalists.

MOROCCO.

The Times referring to the French campaigns against the people of Morocco says:—

"France will yet have to undertake minor campaigns in order to occupy the remote parts of the Middle Atlas Range, but serious, united resistance of the tribes is a thing of the past, and already negotiations are on foot for many tribal submissions....The French perfectly understand the attitude of independence of these Atlas tribes, and treat them, as they deserve to be treated, as worthy enemies. They have defended their independence, though their independence only means the continuance of the misery in which they have always existed...."

Where is the new spirit that we are told has arisen in European politics?

* * *

Mr. Cathal Brugha, the Sinn Fein M.P. for Waterford, was arrested on January 3rd, no charge being stated.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A CRIME?

BY LILLIAN SCOTT TROY.

After the American Government had requested the release of Baron von Horst, interned in 1914 just after the declaration of war, claiming him as an American citizen, and was refused by the Whitehall authorities, an attempt was made to learn the reason why the Government were so feverishly anxious to hold him as an alleged German. The American Government through the Embassy in London made certain inquiries of the Foreign Office, and the following reply from Sir Edward Grey may perhaps explain the dangerous nature of this alleged German.

Grey wrote: "after careful consideration of the circumstances His Majesty's Government have decided that Baron von Horst's connection with the majority of the agitations *raised of late years* against authority in this country renders it impossible to authorise his release *without risk.*"

So the Government considered it a *risk* to release a prisoner whose only "agitation" consisted in assisting in the feeding of one thousand and more children per day during the dock strike of 1912! Surely it was a risk—suppose he actually fed some more hungry children! Such things must be stopped and discouraged, and the feeding of the children of striking fathers should be left to the refinements of hunger—the vulgarity of feeding them is apparent, and a risky thing for a man or woman to undertake, and especially so if there is likelihood of a war coming along. (It is quite true that this man also stood bail for two sick suffragettes, so he is a double-dyed criminal, and it is a wonder they did not shoot him as they threatened to do for a couple of years.) Crime must be put down. Of course, there are plenty of people who "agitated" for years before the war; but somehow that is not quite so bad as actually feeding children of strikers.

The fathers and mothers of those hungry little children will no doubt be pleased to learn that this prisoner, who, by the way, was Labour candidate for the New York Legislature in the eighties, became paralysed in both legs due to his internment; that when he moves about another old "Hun" prisoner carries him on his back—no stretcher being allowed! Serve him very well right, too, for did not Sir Edward Grey say that he had been connected with "agitation" against authority in this country *before the war;* and isn't it against all law and order to expect the release of a man with such criminal tendencies. Now be sensible for a moment, you working-class people. Just suppose that the Government released this paralysed man, who is carried about on the back of a prisoner—for all the world like a sack of potatoes—suppose they had, and he assisted in feeding 96,000 meals to hungry children! Think of the *risk* to the Government! Suppose he bailed out some political prisoners! Of course he couldn't do either because he hasn't a penny now—thanks to a benevolent Government; but suppose he could? Don't you shudder to think of the risk of it? And—don't you shudder to think of the Labour "leaders" who took the reply of Sir Edward Grey lying down—if they didn't jolly well agree with it.

Speak softly! Hold your precious breaths! This interned "Hun" who says he is an American citizen—who was labour's candidate for the New York Legislature when he was but twenty-one years old—this "risky" chap is an *honorary member of the Dock, Wharf, Riverside and General Labourers Union.* His address now is The Hospital, Camp One, Douglas, Isle of Man. And—before I say: "Happy New Year to you"—let me tell you that he is not permitted to see a single visitor. The Government takes no risks—but he still lives. And some are waiting to put flowers on his grave!

* * *

Douglas Golding writes from Dublin: "When is the Labour Party going to hold a monster meeting to protest against the atrocities now being committed in our name in Germany and Austria?

* * *

According to *The Manchester Guardian*, Prof. Masaryk has said now that the Czecho-Slovaks want to leave Russia, but the Allies keep them there.

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LONDON MEETINGS.

OUT DOOR.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10th.
Tower Hill.—12 (NOON), Miss Price.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 11th.
Great Push in S.E. District for a People's Peace and Socialism.—Meet at the Clock Tower, Lewisham, at 3 P.M., and at Camberwell Lane at 6.30 P.M. Speakers: Mrs. Cole, Miss Price, and Mrs. Walker.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 12th.—Osborn Street.—11.45 A.M., Ex-Inspector John Syme.
Finsbury Park.—3 P.M., Miss Price.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14th.
White Cross Street.—12 (NOON), Miss Price.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 17th.
Queen's Crescent, Kentish Town.—5.30 P.M., Miss Price.
SATURDAY, JANUARY 18th.
Great Push in Tottenham.

INDOOR.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12th.
20. Railway Street (Poplar W.S.F.).—7 P.M., Mr. Edmunds, "Possibilities of our Age." Chair: Mrs. Cressall. Discussion.
MONDAY, JANUARY 13th.
44, Malden Road, Kentish Town (St. Pancras W.S.F.).—2.30 P.M., Business Meeting.
FRIDAY, JANUARY 17th.
400, Old Ford Road.—8 P.M., General Meeting, London Section.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12th.
Kingsley Hall, Botolph Road, Bow, 8.15 P.M.—Muriel Lester, "Unity."
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14th.
Walthamstow League of Rights for S.S., William Morris Hall, Somers Road.—2.30 P.M. Miss Horsfall.
SUNDAY, JANUARY 19th.
The Communist Club, 8 P.M.—Mrs. Bridges Adams, "Education."
West End Women's International Finance Committee, 3 P.M., 26, Soho Square.
Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, "Hands off Russia Meeting," 7.30 p.m.

* * *

Before evacuating Pskoff the Germans handed over the administration to a committee of capitalists and bourgeois intellectuals, who immediately formed a White Guard to "preserve order."

* * *

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THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA.

This is not a subject one can write about with enthusiasm. There is no movement to speak of; certainly no sign of activity among Socialist or Labour women. In fact we have gone back. Prior to the war we had our Women's Labour Leagues apparently firmly established on the Rand, but they have gone the way of every Labour organisation that is not founded on the principles of Socialism and have become mere "Gift and Comfort Committees." The real reason for the backwardness of the Women's Movement out here is, of course, the presence of an enormous supply of cheap native labour. Women have not, to any great extent, entered into the Labour market and any slight restlessness that has been shown by a few is but the reflex of the movement elsewhere. Such activity as there is, is confined almost entirely to middle class diletanttes, who, like your aristocrat munition makers, are ever looking for new sensations to amuse and vary their empty existences. So they make a great to-do (spasmodically) about the Franchise, demanding that it be granted to women on the same terms "as it is or may be granted to men." Different franchise laws prevail in the separate Provinces, so their demands are elastic and accommodating, ranging from Adult Suffrage in the Transvaal and barring colour, to a property qualification in the Cape, including coloured persons. The Backvelder, however, will have none of it, and quotes the Bible to prove that "women's sphere is the home." We have, however, the municipal vote, and of course it has made not the slightest difference to women generally—the women councillors voting class every time. For the School Board we are not permitted to vote, but, curiously enough, we may become members. Here again, Labour men and women are neglectful or indifferent, and the only women returned to those Boards are those whose aim it is to perpetuate the Capitalist system of education combined with a due and humble reverence for the Flag, the King and the Church.

Such is briefly the situation here—we are somewhat in advance of the Patagonians, but a long way behind the Eskimos. There are signs, however, that we must travel the long trail before emancipation is achieved. Prohibition of many imports has created the need for factories and already women are engaged in cardboard box-making, and in shirt and hat and cap-making. The leather and tanning factories are making arrangements to start girls, aged 16, as learners, and there is a demand for similar labour in the newly started starch factories. The women and girls who are entering such trades are mostly poor Dutch, who have migrated from the land to the big towns. They are woefully ignorant, and easy of exploitation, and there is no women's organisation to help or guide them. You will, perhaps, conclude from what I have written that there is little to interest your readers in the movement here—in time there may be, but at present we are merely entering on the stages that you have long past. This, however, is a country of surprises and we may suddenly emerge. One does not get a clear perspective in war time.

CHRIS. BARNET.

CLYNES AND *THE HERALD*.

Mr. Clynes is annoyed with *The Herald* because it has advocated a general strike to secure a new election. When a general strike comes we hope it will be for something much more important than an election—for instance, to bring the Allied armies out of Russia and Germany and to establish the Soviets in Britain.

HENDERSON AND A CAPITAL TAX.

Mr. Arthur Henderson has been debating with Mr. Henry Bell the question of a levy on capital. Mr. Bell instances the cases of A, unmarried, who has had a good time and spent the whole of his £1,000 a year income, and B, who has saved half his £1,000 a year income to provide for his old age and start his children in life. Mr. Bell protests that it is unjust to impose a tax on B from which A, because of his extravagance, is exempt. Mr. Henderson replies: "What the Labour Party proposes to do is to reduce this penalty on thrift. The capital levy will enable the income-tax to be reduced probably to its pre-war rate, so that B, whilst paying his tiny quota to the capital levy, will be spared the considerable annual payment that he now has to make as income-tax on his £10,000 of investments. The thrifty B will, under the Labour Party's proposals, be left in enjoyment of a larger net income than he now has."

Mr. Henderson's explanation seems very much like a conjuring trick! How can it be that a levy on capital will both pay for the war and at the same time present those who pay the tax with larger incomes? But surely it is not the duty of the Labour Party to worry about such minor matters. Surely its business is to level up the conditions of the people whose incomes are not one-tenth or one-twentieth of £1,000 a year to the £1,000 a year standard of comfort! A "tiny" tax on capital as a panacea of social ills is the sort of silly mirage that the Labour Party ought not to be running after. Why does it not go for Socialism?

MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

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FOREIGN COMMERCIAL POLICY IN NEW RUSSIA,

(continued from page 1186).

capital, which does not regulate its activities according to public needs, but according to the speculative possibilities of profit. The systematisation of foreign commerce ought to be effected from the outlook of the entire organisation of the economic life of the country.

7. The "nationalisation" of foreign commerce signifies that the import of commodities from abroad ought to correspond with real popular needs, as determined by the Department of Economy. This signifies that payment for imports must be made by this Department, and that opportunity for profit-making on the part of private capital shall be reduced to a minimum.

8. As regards the occupied territories or the independent states which formerly constituted part of the Russian economic system, our commercial policy is based upon the common interests of all. A customs' union is a vital necessity for the interested parties. A desirable solution of this question will facilitate the transition to production under peace conditions, alike in Russia, Poland, the Ukraine, and the Baltic provinces. As a sequel to suitable treaties there should ensue direct exchange of commodities, with both independent and occupied territories, on condition that the imported commodities really go to the population.

9. To bring about the nationalisation of foreign commerce we must have recourse to all available methods (State, public, and private). A fundamental principle must be a State monopoly of purchase. To prevent smuggling there must be created a controlling office which will perform its functions in association with the Central Purchasing Office. Private capitalist undertakings must be nationalised by degrees.

10. Foreign concerns, including those hitherto in the hands of the War Office, are transferred to the Council for Foreign Commerce. The following problems will require special treatment: (*a*) prices; (*b*) tonnage; (*c*) marine insurance; (*d*) warehousing; (*e*) commercial credit; (*f*) customs.

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